



## THERE IS SUCH A THING AS A “FREE RIDE” VETERANS RIDE FOR FREE ON LRT AND CITY BUSES

**A**S OF JULY 1, some 50,000 of Minnesota’s disabled veterans qualify for free rides on fixed-route services in the state. Of the 50,000 qualifying veterans statewide, it is estimated that nearly 900 reside in Bloomington.

The program makes it possible for disabled veterans to ride free on the Hiawatha light rail line, which just celebrated its five-year anniversary, and the Northstar commuter rail line, which will run between Big Lake and downtown Minneapolis beginning late 2009.

To qualify for free rides, disabled veterans must show a veteran’s identification card issued by a Veterans Association Medical Center with the words “Service Connected” or “S.C.” below the photo.

For more information, visit [va.gov/healtheligibility/application/IDCard.asp](http://va.gov/healtheligibility/application/IDCard.asp).



## BUCKTHORN BUST VOLUNTEERS NEEDED TO HELP WEED OUT INVASIVE PLANT

**B**UCKTHORN, AN INVASIVE plant species that grows very quickly, is making a major impact on many of Bloomington’s wooded areas, choking out native trees, shrubs and other plants. Join the City and Pond Dakota Heritage Society in clearing buckthorn from Pond Dakota Mission Park, 401 East 104th Street, overlooking the Minnesota River Valley, on **Saturday, October 10, 9 a.m. - 12 p.m.**

Volunteers should come to the park on the day of the event for registration and instructions. Be sure to wear sturdy shoes, jeans, long-sleeved shirts and eye protection. Some cutting and removal tools will be provided, but volunteers should bring a bow saw, handsaw or hand shears if they have them. Water and snacks will also be provided. For more information, call Parks and Recreation at 952-563-8877.

**WEBSITE KEYWORD: BUCKTHORN.**

# TOWARD A MORE SUSTAINABLE FUTURE

*Earth Action Heroes protect the earth. Whether it’s saving energy or guarding Bloomington’s precious natural resources, these individuals are making a difference. Here are your neighbors in action...*

## EARTH ACTION HEROES CHIPOTLE’S EARTH CHAMPION

**W**ESTON PETERSON MAY have grown up in a farming community in Minnesota, but he never gave much thought to the chemicals used in food production. When he began managing the Chipotle restaurant on the corner of France Avenue and Old Shakopee Road his whole philosophy about food and the environment changed.

One of the first things Peterson did was to order recycling bins. He even brought the recyclables home with him every night until the bins arrived and the landlord coordinated pick-up of the items. Yet he didn’t stop there.

“When I started working here I knew I wanted to recycle, I also knew about the ‘food with integrity’ thing, but I wasn’t going to buy into it without researching it myself first,” Peterson said.

Peterson said what he learned intrigued him. Chipotle not only encourages recycling, it follows strict

guidelines when it comes to where its food originates and how it’s prepared.

According to Peterson, Chipotle only serves food that is unprocessed, family farmed, naturally raised, hormone- and antibiotic-free and in some cases, organic. There are no microwaves or freezers in Chipotle’s kitchens. Peterson orders ingredients fresh from local farms and co-ops and prepares the food by hand as soon as it arrives.

“Dealing with fresher, higher quality products is easier,” Peterson said. “You don’t need to worry about putting a bag in the freezer, then in a machine and then getting rid of all the packaging.”

Peterson started speaking at Bloomington schools on the importance of eating fresh, locally produced foods. He also started a food donation program, providing chips and guacamole to local charities and schools. He said he hopes

that Chipotle’s practices will encourage other restaurants to recycle and buy more locally grown, unprocessed foods.

The Mall of America Chipotle also practices sustainability with its use of LED lights and “green” cleaning products.



### DID YOU KNOW?

The City Code requires all Bloomington businesses to recycle. For more information, call Public Works at 952-563-8750.

Peterson said it’s only a matter of time before these practices trickle down to his restaurant. When they do, he said he will be more than happy to implement them.

## CARING FOR OUR ENVIRONMENT

### CURLY-LEAF PONDWEED INVASIVE WEED TREATMENT BEING EXPLORED



Although not a threat to fish, birds or other wildlife, the floating plants out-compete with native plants for sun and increase nutrients in the lake when they die, often contributing to algae blooms in late summer.

Management of Normandale Lake is under the authority of the Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE) and Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR), which permit use of herbicides only in limited sections of the lake.

“As owner of Normandale Lake, the City must convince the ACOE and DNR that its remediation programs address the overall lake ecology, not just pondweed removal via an herbicide that kills other plants,” Lee said.

In 2008, the City and Nine Mile Creek Watershed District received DNR approval to control curly-leaf pondweed in Anderson Lakes. The mitigation plan includes draining Anderson Lake and spot-treating it with herbicide. The City also petitioned to undertake a curly-leaf pondweed control project on Normandale Lake. Plans have been submitted to the ACOE for initial guidance before an in-depth feasibility study is pursued. Treatment of Normandale Lake may include a whole-lake herbicide treatment as early as spring 2010, whole-lake drainage or combination of partial drainage with herbicide treatment. Follow-up treatments would likely occur over the next four years.

For more information, contact City of Bloomington Senior Civil Engineer Scott Anderson at 952-563-4867 or Nine Mile Creek Watershed District Administrator Kevin Bigalke at 952-835-2078.

**I**F YOU ENJOY the trails around Normandale Lake, you’ve probably noticed more green than blue on the lake’s surface. This is because curly-leaf pondweed has made the lake its new home.

### FALL REMINDER KEEP LEAVES OFF THE STREETS



**S**OON THE ONLY HINT we will have that the vibrant fall foliage ever existed will be the crumpled remains of leaves that litter our yards. Leaves also clog storm sewers and can pollute our lakes, ponds and rivers. When the time comes to rake those leaves, be sure to have some paper bags handy, as plastic is not accepted; or better yet, compost leaves. Raking or blowing leaves into streets or storm drains is a violation of the City Code. For more information, call Public Works at 952-563-8751.